

THE
MIRROR OF THE STAGE

OR,
New Dramatic Censor;

CONSISTING OF
ORIGINAL MEMOIRS OF THE PRINCIPAL ACTORS,
ORBITOISSIMS
ON THE
NEW PIECES AND PERFORMERS;
ANECDOTES, ORIGINAL ESSAYS,

&c. &c. &c.

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The Wonderful Comedian, &c. &c.

Embellished with a striking Portrait by J. R. Cruikshank, Esq. of
Mr. C. KEMBLE as Friar Michael, in 'Maid Marian.'

LONDON:

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We have received the favor of Philo-Tragicus, it shall be inserted in our next.

R. R. is informed the Two Gallows Slaves will be concluded in our next number.

We have received the Drawing from "A Friend," and shall certainly avail ourselves of his kindness.

"Otbo's" Manuscript is left as he desired at our publishers.

If the complaints of *One of the Band* of T. R. D. L. be addressed to the proper quarter, they will no doubt be attended to; we will not insert *ex parte* statements of this description.

We hope to hear from "*Dramaticus*" as early as convenient.

The lines to Miss Forde are inadmissible.

"*Dangle*" has not sent as he promised.

"A constant Reader" on Mr. Macready's *Macbeth* cannot be inserted, it is merely reiterating our already published remarks.

THE WONDERFUL COMEDIAN.

It was rumoured that several needy-looking men were brought up to the Police Office, charged with disfiguring walls and buildings with chalk, &c. displaying "*Inimitable Oxberry*," "*Wonderful comedian*, to be seen at the Surrey." When asked for their defence, said, they were in the united employ of a celebrated Quack Doctor and a certain Manager, and times being hard, were compelled to do *any dirty work*.

OLYMPIC THEATRE.

Monsieur Alexandre continues to attract numerous fashionable audiences to his inimitable performance; a detailed account of the latter part of which we shall give in our next.

THE
Mirror of the Stage;
OR,
NEW DRAMATIC CENSOR.



"To hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature;
To show virtue her own feature; scorn her own image;
And the very age and body o' th' times its form and pressure."

No. 19.] MONDAY, APR. 21st, 1823. [Vol. II.

MEMOIR OF MR. C. KEMBLE.

"CUSTOM demands, and who denies her sway?"—Our only apology for attempting a biography so frequently represented to the public eye, and too universally known to call for minute or lengthened repetition. Mr. Charles Kemble (we must still call him so) was born in 1775, at Brocknock, in South Wales, that town also being the birth-place of his sister, Mrs. Siddons. He pursued his studies at the college of Douey, in Flanders, and returned from a five years' application with those acquirements requisite for the adoption of any of the learned professions: he was, however, engaged at the Post Office; but it may easily be imagined the monotony of such a track but ill-accorded with his kindling genius, which has since been so successfully cultivated and admired. He commenced his theatrical career as *Orlando*, at the Sheffield Theatre, which essay predicted his future excellence. After making the usual tour, he appeared at Drury-Lane in the winter of 1794, in the character of *Malcolm*, in "*Macbeth*." From that period Mr. Kemble has gradually acquired that professional superiority and public esteem to which he has now so legitimate a claim.

Mr. Kemble has not, at present, his rival on the British stage in versatility of talent and the direction of its character: he possesses a genius, liberal, classic, and refined, adding to the rough gallantry of the storied *Falconbridge*, the fashioned elegance of *Charles* or *Love-more*.—A poetic critic has said, "a nonchalance that quite destroys the scene," is observable in the practice of Mr. Kemble. Now, we have a great regard for the opinions of Harry Stoe Vandyk—though they are sometimes too glowingly coloured;—the fault of being expressed in verse, as poetry, if not fancifully ardent in its admiration,

becomes negative in its applause, without perhaps so much the intention of forming such opposites, as the difficulties of expressing a medium opinion in rhyme.—The imagination rises with rich, unqualified description; and, as in all worldly feelings, feels from its height, greater disappointment from the intrusion of opposite, detracting circumstances; and thus estimating the power of the opposing character by the impulse experienced, thereby over-rate its purposed effects.—We have, in our wish to combat opinion, digressed thus far, willing to question previous notions entertained of any subject which duty may present to us—concussion of steel and flint elicits fire—so does reasonable argument beget just valuation.

We conceive this “nonchalance” to be one of Mr. Kemble’s greatest merits:—it is not inattention—it is not inertness—but a subduement, a reposing from the bustle and agitation of wakening incident,—impulse startles nature, but leaves its efforts passive and humbled, even from the circumstance of its irritation. We are now speaking where great accident engenders passion, and sinking the agent into one of less magnitude, we find its effect proportionably the same.—It is the vast dash of the wave, and the stillness which succeeds it!—so, we have no doubt, Mr. Kemble justly estimates, and follows.

There is a pointed energy in the gallant heroes of this gentleman, an openness of soul, which in its simple declaration, illustrates the mind of true nobility more than any laboured arts of new, capricious fancies—there is no study to be peculiar, and thereby it is so.—Where honor, generosity of disposition, or nobleness of resolve, is to be developed, Mr. Kemble is most successful.—The tenacious fame, quibbling at a breath,—the spendthrift mind, prodigal in kindness,—the reckless defiance—starts, bestows, and threatens in look, and accent truly chivalrous.—We thus see Kemble, and we think of lances, tournaments, and lady-love.—To betray the black emotions of the soul is not so much his province.

In Comedy, where heart beats not from the head, Kemble pleases by the careless buoyant youthfulness:—the ardour for action—and the lassitude succeeding.—But his intriguing polished gallant, uniting blandness of tone to elegance of manners, is more to be admired. Kemble bestowed thus, and in opposition to the frailty of female virtue, affords, perhaps, the best picture the stage can produce of the *existing* though disguised emotions of man toward woman. The specious glittering vest is torn from the unprincipled—and the true movements are infinitely developed—it is the lamb before the springing ounce!—the dove parleying with the vulture!—(who shall say the stage is not in its intention, excellent?—fools, or such whose narrow minds subject them to the ravings of those interested in their ignorance.)

In *Friar Tuck’s* unstudied gait, and decisive opinions, Mr. Kemble commands our praise:—he never enters, but we associate with his appearance undried lips and venison pasties.

To conclude, we conceive Mr. Kemble to be an actor who has been a good observer of humanity, and one in whom the bent of strong genius has improved in its legitimate vocation. D.

TO THE EDITOR, "ON MR. KEAN'S ACTING, &c."

MR. EDITOR,—I know not whether I have commenced a thankful task; perhaps not, notwithstanding I feel it impossible to restrain the desire of lashing folly, ignorance, or illiberality, wherever I find it, if the scourge be but of cobweb spun, instead of "beadled whip," be assured I claim not the virtue of lenity, *au contraire*—weakness of means.

I allude to the copious and *intellectual* strictures of Mr. KEAN in your last number. The critic, appears to treat with a deal of humour and levity the observations with which the public have regarded this actor. When a man thinks himself *very* witty, how easy it is for him to swell upon his own *good* opinion; how slipantly, how flowingly, and (above all) how cleverly come forth the rickety imps of his imagination,—how they accord!—what consistency!—what ornament! Doubtless H. (Mr. Kean's commentator) congratulates himself on such a glowing picture, when he strung together his figurative nothings on Mr. K.'s first career in London. Marry, Sir, I warrant the varlet concluded every sentence with a self-approving and self-inspiring twitch, setting it down for certain that he had said a *good thing*. This gentlemen only wants the talent to be very bitter: he has followed the first supposition of the drunken knight, though failing in his accompanying injunction—"though you write it with a goose quill, be sure to put *gall* enough in it." We might smile at the tetchy efforts of a baby, with a pop gun, yet be somewhat startled, at a well, though mischievously, drawn cross-bow. There is nothing even for common sense to attack in this critic, (*critic!* the term is as fashionable and mis-placed as Esq.) he cannot stand the shivering of a lance, the sound of the charge shakes him from his pegasus, and the knight becomes *le petit chien couchant*. As it is not chivalric to gallop over *any thing* unhorsed, I will leave the gentleman on the turf with his cap and bells and decorative goose quill.

Sir, I am not one of those who bury all considerations and opinions in the instant of a new astonishment; nor, because Mr. Kean surprised the public by his transcendant abilities, can I forget the perfections of others or be blind to those specks which intrude even in the most refulgent orb. I conceive that Mr. Kean is frequently mistaken; yet believe that the error, when occurring, lies more to his appealing to the imagination than the judgment. It startles and delights us like the wide romantic leap of the boiling wave, it breaks upon the sense, and confounds with its terrific beauties, appals whilst it attracts, threatens whilst it fixes: yet I allow Mr. Kean often attempts to embody circumstances with effort too laboured for its direction, and thereby cause sameness and sometimes disappointment; but when devoted to worthy incident, it is brilliant in its effect, controlling in its power. I have remarked, when the o'erspent feelings have urged their last in broken murmurs, and the mind, passion tossed, fallen wretchedly supine; have seen the energies of conflicting agents crushed, broken, trampled on, with the gathering, deadly leap, when every "petty artery" asserts its strength, and stung by passion strikes its fearful last: these, with all the varying mysterious tones that thrill humanity, I have wit-

nessed fully responded in the passions of the actor in question. Mr. Kean, as I have said, has his faults : a frequent quibbling—a wish to stamp every thing with value when the matter cannot be made to bear the impress ; this is his prevailing error, and indeed, nearly his only one ; but then his merits ! Who would not gladly take the encrusted diamond ?

I do not pretend, Sir, to intrude any exclusive remarks ; but I do from my soul dislike that positive, dogmatical method of expressing opinion:—it is *good*, it is *bad*. Sir, in these things I am quite a child.—I like to know, “ *Why?* ” I do not admire a man to set out with an avowal of descanting on a subject—scribbling two or three prefatory scraps, as foreign as ingenuity can render them, and then sapiently remarking, that the said subject is too well known for remark : this, with a silly mention of a casual devotion said to be paid to Bacchus by Mr. Kean, comprises his whole work : this being *ridiculous*, he cannot say any thing as for ability—so crowns the folly with ignorance : cannot say thing on the acting of Mr. Kean. If any gentlemen of sense contributes to the Mirror he may truly exclaim, “ if I ’ aint ashamed of company, I am a soused gurnet.”

April, 1823.

Yours, PINCHER.

We have inserted the above letter because it is our wish to give every facility to fair and honest discussion—the lateness of the time at which we received the communication precludes the possibility of our answer in this number—we shall most certainly accept the gentleman’s challenge, and meet him “ front to front,” in our next.

ED.

Literary Review,

THE AGE OF BRONZE.—BY LORD BYRON,

(Resumed from page 85.)

Smile to survey the Queller of the Nations
Now daily squabbling o’er disputed rations ;
Weep to perceive him mourning, as he dines,
O’er curtailed dishes and o’er stinted wines ;
O’er petty quarrels upon petty things—
Is this the man who scourged or feasted kings ?
Behold the scales in which his fortune hangs,
A surgeon’s statement and an earl’s harangues !
A bust delayed, a book refused, can shake
The sleep of him who kept the world awake.
Is this indeed the Tamer of the Great,
Now slave of all could tease or irritate—
The paltry jailer and the prying spy,
The staring stranger with his note-book nigh ?
Plunged in a dungeon, he had still been great ;
How low, how little was this middle state,
Between a prison and a palace, where
How few could feel for what he had to bear !
Vain his complaint,—my lord presents his bill,
His food and wine were doled out duly still :
Vain was his sickness—never was a clune
So free from homicide—to doubt’s a crime ;
And the stiff Surgeon, who maintained his cause,
Hath lost his place, and gained the world’s applause.
But smile—though all the pangs of brain and heart
Disdain, defy, the tardy aid of art ;

Though, save the few fond friends, and imaged face
 Of that fair boy his sire shall ne'er embrace,
 None stand by his low bed—though even the mind
 Be wavering, which long awed and awes mankind;—
 Smile—for the fettered Eagle breaks his chain,
 And higher worlds than this are his again.
 How, if that soaring Spirit still retain
 A conscious twilight of his blazing reign,
 How must he smile, on looking down, to see
 The little that he was and sought to be!
 What though his name a wider empire found
 Than his ambition, though with scarce a bound;
 Though first in glory, deepest in reverse,
 He tasted empire's blessings and its curse;
 Though kings, rejoicing in their late escape
 From chains, would gladly be their tyrant's ape;
 How must he smile, and turn to yon lone grave,
 The proudest sea-mark that o'ertops the wave!
 What though his jailor, *duteous* to the last,
 Scarce deemed the coffin's lead could keep him fast,
 Refusing one poor line along the lid
 To date the birth and death of all it hid,
 That name shall hallow the ignoble shore,
 A talisman to all save him who bore.

(*To be continued.*)

FIVE IN ONE,

(*Resumed from page 78.*)

Enter HUMPHREY HOBNAIL; *he crosses the Stage, whistling, taking no notice of PROTEUS, till the third time of calling, upon which he turns round abruptly.*

Pro. Humphrey! Humphrey! Humphrey!

Hum. Well, Zur, and what do ye want wi' I?

Pro. Nothing. Nothing particular,—only, that is—how do you do, Humphrey?

Hum. Pratty and well: I do hope you be the same.

Pro. Why, the latter I am, certainly; but, as to the former, I have no claim to that title, when such a person as Mr. Humphrey Hobnail is in company.

Hum. Eh, what! oh, ha, ha! (*laughs.*) I understands you: why, I be a tightish kind of chap, certainly. Do you know, down in our parts, they used to call I the model of *petrefaction*. But, Lord-a-mercy on us! what be a poor simple country joskin like I, to some of you Lunnun chaps. Tother day there, one of them kind of things, you call a *dam*—

Pro. Don't swear, Humphrey.

Hum. I be'ant a ganging to swear.—*A Dan—Dandy! a Dandy!* down at measter's house, wi' flashy clothes on, and all that; when, at the same time, I'll be shot if he'd gotten a farthing in his pocket to settle his reckoning; nor never a morsel of shirt, tho' he'd gotten a stiff starched-up collar, almost to his eyes; and his hair looked, for all the world, as if he had been drawn thro' a hedge the wrong way. So, as he had settled his inside for *nought*, we thought, (to make him all over alike,) that we'd wet him on the outside, at the same price. So, we, we, (*chuckling.*) What do you think we did?

Pro. Upon my soul, I can't conceive.

Hum. Why—we ducked him in the horse-pond. (*Laughs.*)

Pro. Very obliging, indeed!

Hum. Wasn't it? But, would you believe it? he never so much as said,—Gentlemen, I thank you for your polite attention. Oh! the ungratefulness of this world is beyond belief.

Pro. An ingrate!

Hum. *Ingrate!* that he was, sure enough; for master had him clapped into cage till he could pay his bill. I zeed him grinning through the bars myself. I thought he looked for all the world like an apple dumpling peeping through a gridiron.

(*They both laugh for some time, till PROTEUS stops suddenly, and appears as if in pain.*)

Pro. Oh! oh, dear me! what an attack. I am taken ill; reach me a chair, Humphrey. Oh, oh! (*sinks into a chair which HUMPHREY brings down.*)

Hum. Mercy on us! what's to be done? where's your complaint? where do you ail?

Pro. *Here! just here!* (*displays an empty pocket on the side opposite HUMPHREY; the latter does not perceive it.*)

Hum. It is very sudden; hean't it, Sir?

Pro. Oh no! I have expected it would come a long time before it has.

Hum. How misfortunate, to be sure. Hadn't you better go to the doctor's? Can I do ye any good—can I lend you any assistance?

Pro. (*starting up.*) Will you lend me half-a-crown? I haven't any change left—and if I don't have some assistance I shall certainly expire. Oh! its coming again. Oh, oh!

(*he appears as if fainting.*)

Hum. Why, Zur, I have only gotten a crown piece in my pocket, but you shall have that, and welcome. (*gives it to him.*) How do you feel now, Sir?

Pro. Five times better than I was. Quite a king in constitution to what I was just now.

Hum. *A King!* So you ought, Sir: you know you have just received a Crown! (*bell rings.*) There! there! I be wanted. Do ye go and get something to mend your present condition, and put some spirits into you. (*bells ringing.*) Coming, coming. (*bell rings.*) Well, I be coming. Damn the bells, what a clatter they keep.

[*Exit HUMPHREY. Bells ringing.*]

(*To be continued.*)

Theatrical Diary.

DRURY LANE.

April 7th, Miss Clara Fisher's Benefit. *Duenna, Bombastes Furioso, Actress of all Work.*—8th, *Wild Oats, Chinese Sorcerer.*—9th, *Pizarro, Chinese Sorcerer.*—10th, *Cabinet, Chinese Sorcerer.*—11th, *Simpson and Co.*

Three Weeks after Marriage, Chinese Sorcerer.—12th, *Cabinet, Chinese Sorcerer.*—14th, *Stranger, Chinese Sorcerer.*—15th, *Haunted Tower, Chinese Sorcerer.*—16th, *Suspicious Husband, Chinese Sorcerer.*—17th, *School for Scandal, Chinese Sorcerer.*—18th, *Richard the Third, Chinese Sorcerer.*—19th, *Cabinet, Chinese Sorcerer.*

THE CABINET was played at this theatre on Thursday; an universal spirit seemed to pervade the whole corps dramatique. Braham was in excellent voice, and Miss Stephens, the artless touching child of song, breathed the very soul of melody. Her duet with Harley, "Never think of Meeting Sorrow" was particularly felicitous, and drew forth a rapturous encore, only exceeded by the simultaneous approbation of "*The Bird that Sings.*" We never saw Miss Stephens possessed by so much sprightliness of manner; surely, she caught a portion of it from the inspiring bustle and hilarity of Harley. He will always please us, judgment is perhaps not continually appealed to; but we must laugh and applaud industrious efforts, though wanting a little in nicety. Mrs. H. Hughes is an actress of ability, appears well to understand her author, adding a determination to gratify. Mrs. Austin met with some applause—there is not sufficient finish, a want of fulness in her tones—practice and science must yet impart their aid. Dowton's *Peter* was as bluff, as easy, and as honest as it was possible for the *ci-devant* sailor; but the times do not now accord with nautical sentiments of patriotism, blusterings of "a flourishing country," its "indefatigable keepers," &c. yet they were delivered with as much enthusiasm, as when existing they should inspire, by Mr. Dowton—but fell dull and hacknied on the ear, exciting no responsive avowal of their reality. Mrs. Harlowe, though having but little to do, did that little well. Never let Mrs. Coveney exceed the finery of a straw-hat, russet-gown, and a checked apron, a *Guy Mannering* gipsy, or hostess of a country pot-house; for when intruded into velvet and gold, and most outlandishly christened "lady," if that is "holding the Mirror up to Nature," any thing like gentility must start at the reflection.

On account of the indisposition of Mr. Horn, the "*Haunted Tower*" was substituted for the "*Castle of Andalusia*"—so said Mr. Harley, when called on for explanation; indeed the evening's amusements appeared entirely overcast—Miss Stephens executed, with great difficulty, the songs allotted to her; she was evidently labouring under a severe cold. Certainly Braham sung "*Is there a Heart*" most melodiously, and Melrose gave an eminent degree of pathos to "*My Native Land Good Night*;" but we went to see the "*Castle of Andalusia*," and were, we believe, in common with many, disappointed at the substitution of the "*Haunted Tower*," which, though possessing some sweet music, is on the whole dull and uninteresting.

On Thursday, the "*School for Scandal*" was substituted for the advertised "*Cabinet*." Mrs. Davison played *Lady Teazle* charmingly; and the whole piece went off with great spirit.

The "*Chinese Sorcerer*" continues to attract; the scenery, decorations, &c. of this splendid nondescript are fully noticed by their usual patrons. Mrs. Hughes performs the part of *Bri-Ti*, instead of Miss Povey, and with much naïveté. Miss Ford also pleases us.

COVENT GARDEN.

April 7th, *Macbeth*, *Vision of the Sun*.—8th, *Wonder*, *Vison of the Sun*.—9th, *Julian*, *Vision of the Sun*.—10th, *Maid Marian*, *Vision of the Sun*.—11th, *Julian*, *Vision of the Sun*.—12th, *Way to Keep Him*, *Vision of the Sun*.—14th, *Macbeth*, *Vision of the Sun*.—15th, *Duenna*, *Vision of the Sun*.—16th, *Much ado about Nothing*, *Vision of the Sun*.—17th, *King John*, *Vision of the Sun*.—18th, *Belle's Stratagem*, *Vision of the Sun*.—19th, *Rob Roy*, *Vision of the Sun*.

THE WONDER.—We were highly entertained by this comedy on Tuesday evening. It is one in which many pleasant things abound, much lively situation, and a vivacity of dialogue peculiar to its age. Mr. Kemble appeared for the first time since the death of his brother, in *Don Felix*, and was, we may say most affectionately greeted. The sympathy of the public for his loss, thus also expressing its valuation and esteem of the great departed actor, appeared most sensibly to affect the feelings of Mr. Kemble; but after a short interval, the actor assumed its power over the man, and we beheld and admired the *Don Felix* of the authoress. There is a tone, a manner peculiar to Mr Kemble which makes us even applaud vice, when united to wit and polished breeding, and we were so much the more charmed with his *Don Felix*, for being wanting in the detracting associate. He was the gallant, the lover, and the gentleman. Mr. Abbott we scarcely thought capable of so much "proper emphasis and good discretion" as imparted to *Colonel Breton*; it was far above mediocrity. We cannot for our lives speak ill of Fawcett's *Lisardo*, for "there's a respect which makes (our admiration) of long life;" but its longevity grows somewhat asthmatic, at a twenty years' race with the same *Lisardo*. We must naturally esteem our father, and doubtless at one time he might have trundled a hoop or flown a kite with much juvenile expertness and ability; we cannot wean our valuation from the object, but he could not inspire with equal admiration his beholders of these same romping exercises, when he should grasp a walking-stick. Actors, like general officers must become superannuated. Yates spoke the dialect very correct, and was altogether amusing in *Gibby*. Miss Chester would nearly look one out of judgment, and fortunately for our character for impartiality, we do not put our thoughts on paper in the box-lobby, for *Violante* must do more than look well. Miss Chester is elegant and lady-like, but she wants that darting archness, that smiling piquancy and softening nature, so indispensibly requisite for the suspected, teasing, yet loving mistress. Mrs. Gibbs as *Flora* pleased us, but the final apostrophe of Friar Bacon's Head did somehow intrude.—"Time's past."

MACBETH.—Great pains have been taken to render this piece equal in competition to its display at Drury Lane, and with much success. We admire the *Macbeth* of Mr. Macready, it is a chaste and classical performance; some few errors will ever intrude; yet we are not so critically fastidious as to "write evil deeds in brass," when many subsequent beauties sprinkle Lethe on their less glowing predecessors. There is, and we believe we are not singular in the observation, a too transient repose from excessive passion indulged by Mr.

Macready:—his *Macbeth* partakes a little of this fault; but on the whole, it is a nervous and successful effort. His first scene is remarkable for the indulging of that abstraction with which *Macbeth* must naturally be inspired, by the realization of things promised by his supernatural visitants; this emotion is well followed by his growing hopes in his departure from the king, into their subsequent relapse at the meeting of his wife, as if guilt, hesitating and shamed to be the first in its avowal; then, when the fatal league is made, all barriers overcome, the awakenings of stifled conscience, though prone to be resiled, and the final determined exit were excellent.—The soliloquy “Is this a dagger,” was not among his most successful points; there was not sufficient emotion at the “air-drawn” phantasm;—but the incident after the murder received a just and masterly devotion of talent,—and in the exclamation “Wake, Duncan, with this knocking,” with the heart-servent rejoinder, drew down universal admiration.—The banquet scene received the same nice observance;—indeed, Mr. Macready is more the conscience-ridden *Macbeth*, than any we ever witnessed;—his interview with *Banquo’s* spirit, admirably evinced how the most dauntless mind, when stooping to ill, becomes the prey and sport of self-invented tortures.—Mr. Macready preserved the same bearing throughout, and his close was honored with simultaneous approbation. We sincerely wish Mrs. Ogilvie’s powers were subservient to her idea, then we should have little doubt of again witnessing a real *Lady Macbeth*. This lady, however, improves much; and though she cannot satisfy all our notions of retired genius, yet we must not withhold our applause, because there is not that equal worth which only *one* has ever possessed.—We do not admire her reading of the letter.—After hearing of her husband’s parley with the witches, his growing honor as prophesied, there should be a hurried tone, an anxious haste, to gather the rest, which were totally wanting. The temptations of the ambitious woman were judiciously given, as were the taunts of her husband’s vacillation, and of his self-abandonment after Duncan’s murder. Her agitation and rebuke, in the banquet scene, were likewise correct, though somewhat wanting in depth of purpose. Her dreaming scene was in some parts judicious; yet not the most preferable of her performance. Abbott displayed something like energy in the discovery of *Duncan’s* death; but received the tidings of his wife and children’s murder with most philosophical endurance.—Shakspeare surely don’t intend *Macduff* more loyal than conjugal. We never pitied more the effects of youthful infatuation than on seeing Mr. Mason dressed for Scotland’s heir-presumptive. The stage, to early minds, has doubtless many claims; but to Mr. Mason it will prove a tricking *ignus fatuus*, leading him through bush and bramble, brake and wood, and at last, if we mistake not, he will receive unqualified censure for his obstinate pursuit if deaf to reason at his outset. If Mr. M. has any penetration, the blunt opinion indulged by a few real friends, on Wednesday, would silence his pretensions—for tragedy at least, as we believe *Malcolm* ought not to beget any thing like laughter. We now advise him to desist:—the honor of being a one-line messenger from royalty can be no sinecure in a theatre, however in real life, and Mr. M. has no further qualification.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.—We have been much gratified by the revival of this play, and the remembrance of the pleasure it has afforded us, causes our hopes to anticipate a similar presentation of performance. With respect to Miss Chester's *Beatrice*, we must be, like *Dr. Pangloss*, "dead to the fascinations of beauty," to insure a free discussion on this lady's merits. The beaming eye, and joy-inspiring lip, with a thousand charms of "feminine growth," should not for an instant force the rigid muscle of the CRITIC to a smile of seeming approbation, when reason and judgment deny its justice. Miss Chester is vivacious, and sometimes arch; but she is not "the most rare young lady." *Beatrice* should not, according to her own avowal, "speak all mirth and no matter." There is that incessant sporting of the imagination, that restless fancy, and when opposed to one of kindred humour, that poignancy and ardour of wit's invective, which make *Beatrice* the sole *Beatrice*. She is the very *Camilla* of the coterie: to *Benedick*, the sporting virago of "paper bullets," which blending soul and neatness with her archery, stays, fascinates, and threatens, as the gazing serpent. Miss Chester assuredly improved as the author developed himself, and in many parts, pleased us; but she indulged pettishness where she should have displayed spirit, and gave to the edge of keen reply, the fashionable flippancy of *bon mot*: yet, we must not fail to accord her unqualified praise for some readings, nor, because it failed in perfection as a whole performance, deny encomium in a part.

Every idea with which the imagination decorates *Benedick*, was to the utmost realized and even outstript, by the excellence of C. Kemble.—In this part we can confidently assert, after maturely considering the respective abilities of every rival actor, that opposed to Mr. Kemble, "none but himself can be his parallel." We are unwilling that our praise should be thought approaching any thing like exaggeration; and yet to speak as we really imagine the *Benedick* of Wednesday, may be thought by those who were not sufficiently fortunate to partake of our pleasure, a little *outré*. Notwithstanding the picture dwells so glowingly in our "mind's eye," that we shall endeavour to afford as correct a copy as the detracting circumstance of developing thought in "graven letter" will admit. His first scene shone the promising to ray that spreading brightness which attended his subsequent efforts.—The gallant, gay soldier, jeering, not from his nature, all womankind, but from the ignorance of one, whose mind and fancies could blend and harmonize with the humour of his own, *Benedick* rails the fair sex, not only because the repetition of his seeming antipathy has pointed his wit more directly towards the subject, but from the imagined weakness of his own sex towards the other, forming "notable argument" for the exercise,—and this was Mr. Kemble,—the scene in which he is supposed to discover the love of *Beatrice*, was from word to word followed by a brilliant genius tenaciously keeping in view the monitor nature, nor ever once distancing it.—After the accusation made against *Hero*, Mr. Kemble rose from the humorous gentleman to the nerved and noble man of honour, casting aside his late careless jocund reasonings; he towers above the associates and partakers of his merrier moods, and sternly

dares his wronger.—The transition was instantaneous, yet excellent, and in just accordance with the sudden impulse of love's devoted, when shewn the field wherein to gain its hopes. Indeed, we cannot recall one incident which did not receive its full, nay, an additional importance from the acting of Mr. Kemble.

We have seen Farren to more advantage than in *Dogberry*.—there is, if the expression can at all convey our meaning, an acidity, a sharpness in this gentleman's acting, not exactly the foolish mellow chuckle of the self-imagined genius—there were, however, exceptions to this failing and some worthy avowal.—Keeley made *Vergus* equal in consideration to his sapient companion of the "watch."

We admire Abbott generally—and yet are sometimes puzzled with his transitions.—he ought to know that *Claudio* should confront the reproaches of *Hero's* parent with any thing but a smile.—Bartley's *Antonio* was excellent.—The Comedy was given out for repetition on Wednesday with universal approbation.

The *Vision of the Sun* successfully rivals its twin-fellow of Drury-Lane.—Mrs. Vining is as graceful and elegant as any dreaming princess could wish to imagine a future spouse, and Miss Foote more than meets our tyrannic notions of Eastern loveliness.—Too much praise cannot be accorded to Miss Love;—her execution of a song, which is nightly encored, is at once beautiful and commanding.—Farley still looks as important as we suppose magicians generally do—and Grimaldi, with whom are linked a hundred god-like associations, still delights his roaring friends.

SURREY THEATRE.

The celebrated Oxberry, (in letters of immense attraction,) has afforded the visitors of this theatre a treat, during the last fortnight, in the character of *Sam Swipes*, in a piece altered from "*Exchange no Robbery*;" and his favourite part of *Robin Roughhead*, with which he made his first obedience to a London audience some few years since. We are not called upon to furnish our readers with a detail upon Mr. Oxberry's ability, it is sufficiently well known when we infer that *Oxberry was himself*, and played *Sam Swipes* and *Robin Roughhead* with all the characteristic etceteras which is required:—that he had still retained his same perpetual motion of swinging the arm, had recourse to his *olfactory* member with the usual precision, and portion of *gentility* that may be remembered during the Tom and Jerry era, and many other peculiarities naturalizing the character; it may suffice for all the high sounding peals upon that trumpet which Fame has already blown. The house has been repeatedly crowded to excess, and continues to fill at an *early hour*—how can it be otherwise, when we look at the matter;—when we look at Mr. Burroughs's *liberality*, and the *nightly privilege* of Mr. J. H. Amherst. We may probably take an opportunity of saying a few words upon the system practised at the Surrey Theatre, with regard to the present management, in a future number of our work:—we would willingly give up the inclination of so doing; but the very motto by which our labours are guided demand it, and we are not easily drawn from executing that which may be termed our duty. We had

nearly forgotten the scene of Miss Edmiston's *Jane Shore*, which by the way was the finest essay throughout the evenings performances. We had witnessed the talents of this lady upon the boards of that theatre (Drury Lane) from which she ought not to have been withdrawn. We had the chance of a more close observation of the powers of Miss Edmiston in the "*dying scene*" at this house, and it was certainly a fine impressive portrait:—the cold shuddering, and poignant anguish, her feelings might be supposed to endure, the terror depicted in her countenance breaking through its hectic flush of death, when she recognizes her husband,—her sense of shame, and the convulsed agony it created whilst in his arms, were delineated with a most chaste and even delightful sublimity:—it was received with the most cheering congratulations. The last week has produced a further novelty in the appearance of two Indians, whose feats are certainly of a most extraordinary and surprising description, but we have seen so much of the *wonderful*, that we must be excused if our want of taste, or our exclamations of delight, should not be so rhapsodic as many of our contemporaries. We again repeat that these Indians are astonishing; but we cannot estimate their value at a 1000 guineas for six nights. Mr. J. H. Amherst or Mr. Burroughs doubtless can; and if it be not too much savoured of the "puff extraordinary," we hope their expectations will be realized.

SADLERS WELLS.

We are happy, while performing the promise made in our last, of being enabled to refer our friends that the performances here are of the most amusing and agreeable kind. The house, as we have before stated, has been newly embellished; much taste has been displayed in the arrangement of the ornaments; and the *tout ensemble* is very pleasing to the eye. Of the piece "*Doctor Syntax in London*," if it is, as we are told, the first production of the author, we consider it very creditable to his talents, and we augur much from so favorable a beginning; tho' it must be admitted there is but little in the way of character; yet he has exhibited some well directed attempts at satire, and a considerable knowledge of life. The *Doctor* is the most prominent personage in the piece, and his inexperience of the vices of the metropolis, together with his pedantic manners and language, form a ridiculous but amusing contrast to the modern slang of young *Turbot* and *Dusty Bob*—the character of *Jenny Jumps*, the doctor's servant, is drawn with much judgment. The ignorance and awkwardness of a Cumberland dowdy aping the manners of high life, is very happily hit off. We cannot say much in favor of the plot; and we advise the author to trust more to his own inventive powers; or, if he must borrow, at least let him take his hints from a purer source than "*Life in London*." The scenery is new and pretty, and the acting tolerable: Miss Johnstone played *Jenny Jumps* with some truth and fidelity. Lewis entirely failed in giving effect to the character of *Major Longbow*. Vale was what he always is, bustling and confident. Walbourn is clever; but he should remember that at all events the gallery only can be gratified by his frequent indulging of most disgusting liberties. Elliot was the *Doctor* to the very "Picture."

The pantomime of "*Harlequin's Trip to Paris*," is a great deal too long: many of the scenes ought to be curtailed. The novelty of the "*Russian Mountains*," in imitation of the frivolities at the Tivoli Gardens, Paris, seemed to give much pleasure to the audience, who are allowed to participate in the amusement (if so it may be called,) of sliding from the top of the stage to the back of the pit.



DAVIS'S ROYAL AMPHITHEATRE.

It must be particularly gratifying to the manager of this house (Mr. C. Dibdin) to find such flattering marks of approbation bestowed by the public on the Harlequinade of the "*High Mettled Racer*," which is founded upon and embraces all the points in his father's most admirable song of that name:—we remember to have seen it some few years ago; but it strikes us, that there are in the revived piece considerable improvements:—the adapter of it has very judiciously made it a Pantomime, by which means the different stages in the life of that noble animal, the horse, are blended very agreeably with the antics of the motley heroes of fun and frolick. The surprising docility of the horse were never seen to greater advantage than in this piece; it must have been a labor of considerable difficulty to bring it to the perfection it has acquired. The various changes follow each other very closely; and, as a sort of glossary, different verses of the song are introduced to give effect to the action of the Pantomime. Thus then, we have a horse race,—fox chase; (very cleverly managed with real hounds and fox) and lastly the death.

The full houses which the revival has produced, is a sufficient warranty of the public's opinion of the taste of the manager: we have given two spirited wood cuts as illustrative of the best scenes in this most amusing piece. Young Longuemare's graceful dancing on the tight rope, and Gray's extraordinary leaps, complete a very pleasing evening's amusement.



LINES

On the light-hand Portrait in the celebrated Picture of the "Proposal."

The pledge is given; no longer heaves her breast
 With anxious sighs, no more her gaze intense
 The silent prayer speak; resign'd to love,
 The soft disorder all her frame dissolves.
 E'en now the lily o'er the roses steals;
 Now sinks the pallid cheek, the flood of life
 The stream of beauty, round her sickening heart
 Collected, feeds the constant flame within.
 The ardour, half-extinguish'd, of her eyes
 Gleams o'er the radiant humours, as the sun
 His silvery lustre, sheds o'er mantling clouds,
 When in some dubious evening of May
 The youthful giant walks into the West,
 Nor yet with summer heats the twilight glow;
 So to her liquid eyelids, swelling scarce
 Their inward fires disclose, while droops her lip,
 And from its lovely pilaster inclined,
 By languor part, and part by fondness bent,
 Her face projecting begs another kiss
 To seal with truth what passion had declared.

A. B.

IMPROMPTU.

Jem thought to take a mate for life,
 Though all the world belied her,
 Yet owned she'd make an am'rous wife,
 Why?—'cause all the world had tried her.

CIRIO.

Thespian Oracle.

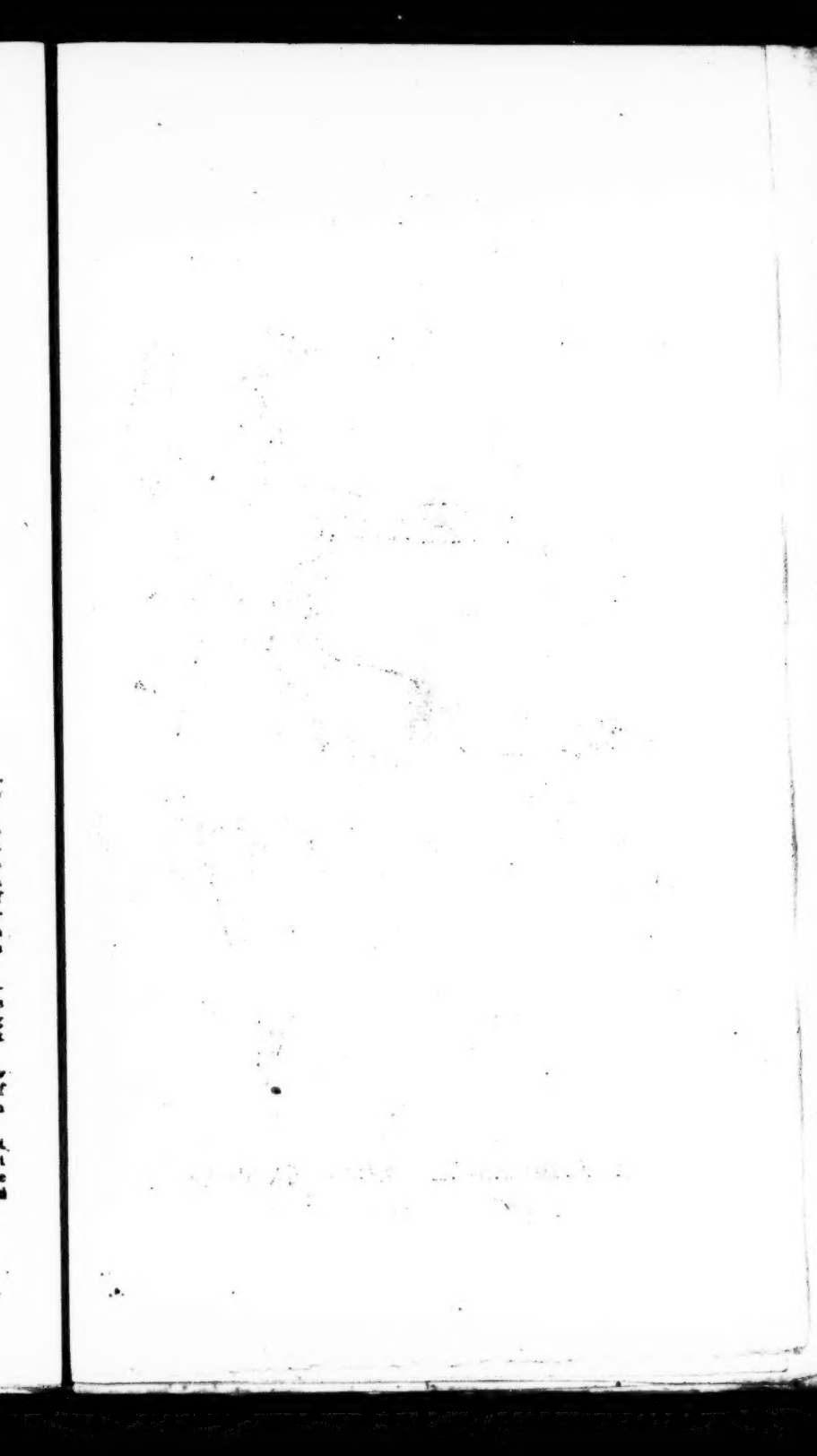
The Bristol Theatre closes next week month—that company removes to Swansea during the races.

It appears that the INIMITABLE actor Oxberry does not wholly intend to "hide his talent in a Napkin," having engaged and opening at the Surrey Theatre in *Sam Swipes*. Mr. Oxberry is a good actor; once we admired him infinitely, but we are afraid now, he draws more at the Craven's Head, than at a Theatre. We never expected this gentleman's merit would have brought itself to the bar, but so it is, and perhaps we have no right to notice its particular disposition, yet we cannot help thinking of the difference subsisting between an admired and excellent actor, and the accompanying Killigrew to a shilling's worth of brandy and water.

Mr. Wilkinson closes his engagement next season at the English Opera, having become a member of the Haymarket company,—at which theatre he is engaged for five years, and where we trust to see him in characters according with his talent, which, we regret to say, has not been the case for the two last seasons at the English Opera.

It is said that Miss Helen Tree, of whom we have before spoken, will appear at Covent Garden on her sister's benefit, as *Calla*, in "*As You Like It*."—If such parts requiring interesting manner and elegance of diction are chosen for her, we doubt not of her complete success.

Miss Chester is engaged at the Haymarket Theatre. Mr. C. Kemble does not join the company the ensuing season. Mr. Abbott it is reported leaves Covent Garden Theatre at the end of the season to undertake the management of the Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Theatres. Mr. Cooper of Drury Lane is engaged at Covent Garden for five years, to commence next season.





MR. JOHN REEVE as MONS^r LA TRIP.
Bachelors Torments.